NAQCC News

Nov 13, 2010	NAQCC Web Site	Issue #130

In this issue:

1. November Sprint.
2. October Challenge Results
3. General Club News
3a. Chapter News
4. Elmer Project
5. CW Cartoon of the Month
6. Member Spotlight
7. News Items and Articles by Our Members

1. NOVEMBER SPRINT: Our November sprint is this coming Wednesday evening local time which is Thursday 0130-0330Z time. Please note your local time stays the same, but because of the switch back to Standard time, the UTC/Z time is different. I'm looking forward to processing 100 or more logs for the 8th month in a row. This month we won't have the distraction of a massive PJpedition. Hopefully we won't have the widespread QRN we had last month either. With both those factors, perhaps we'll have a chance at a new record participation (150 logs?) this time around.

Remember we are back to our normal frequencies for the sprints now after the deviation last month due to the PJpedition. We apologize to those who missed out on some QSO's last month because their rigs or license didn't cover the frequencies we had to use.

If you are entering one of our sprints for the first time, we welcome you and hope you will be a regular participant from now on.

Remember this is only a brief overview of the coming sprint. Be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

2. OCTOBER CHALLENGE RESULTS: We're delighted to have entrants from Russia and Ukraine for our October (and November also) challenge. In fact not only have they entered, but walked away with our three certificates. Congratulations to RW3AI (941 pts.), RN4HAB (851), and UU7JF (496). They were followed in points order by RV3GM, W2JEK, K3WWP, K1IEE, KQ1P, AF4LB, VE3FUJ, KB1PBA, N8XMS. KE5YUM came up short of the required 50 points for a participation point, but we still thank Terry for submitting a report and are listing him in the results.

The October QSO Points challenge was another popular one compared to our overall records of participation in our challenges over the 6 years we've been doing them. We are still a little disappointed in the overall participation levels though. We know that some members are not into contesting or sprinting which is why we have these month-long challenges. They can be done at one's leisure whenever time permits one to be active on the air. We feel that none of them are too hard for any member to master. Submitting results is as simple as possible. Why not give a challenge a try. We're sure you'll like it and want to do more.

See the General Club News section next for more challenge news.

Full Challenge info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- With the explosive growth of, and interest in the NAQCC, we are rapidly approaching a problem. Lack of web site space. Our current web site host - Windstream - limits us to 10MB of space. It's becoming an effort to keep our web site size within that limit. We have had to resort to storing our past newsletters in .pdf form on K3WWP's SkyDrive site. That works, but is inconvenient if someone wants to look up a past newsletter. Now even with that measure we are soon going to have to take further steps to stay within limits. Some options include purchasing commercial web site space on Windstream so we can expand and still keep our site at that familiar location. We could also move the site to a free hosting service but that would involve a change of our familiar URL and many free services are only free because they put annoying advertisements on their hosted web sites. Another option would be to keep our present system on Windstream, but have someone with spare server space to give us room to have an archive portion of our site stored in that space. That would allow us to archive past newsletters, challenge and sprint results, and other such material there in .html form. A simple linking method could integrate our Windstream site with the archive site seamlessly. In a related matter, it would be great to have our own domain name such as naqcc.net or naqcc.org, but those domain names are owned by one of our members, and attempts to contact him about releasing them to the club have been unsuccessful.

What are your thoughts on the matter? I know in the past, a couple members have offered to host our site on their servers, but at the time we didn't foresee this problem arising, and I don't even remember who you were now. If the offer still holds, and you think the dual host method keeping the main site on Windstream with the archive portion on your site would work, let us know.

- We have just finished posting the rules for our 13 2011 challenges except for actual word lists, number of required QSO's, etc. There are a couple changes worth noting. First of all, we are honoring the name 'challenge' more closely. In the past several of our challenges have been more like contests to see who could get the most of this or the fastest that, etc. In other words it was a competition among members rather than a challenge to specifically do this or that. In 2011 we are setting the bar at a certain height and anyone who 'reaches or gets over the bar' receives a certificate, participation point, and web site listing. Anyone who enters the challenge but doesn't make it to or over the bar gets a participation point and web hc035 site listing. Let's clarify that analogy with a couple specific challenge examples.

For an alphabet type challenge with say 10 words, everyone who successfully makes the 10 words gets a certificate, participation point, and web site listing. Everyone who makes 1-9 words gets a participation point and web site listing.

For other challenges that involve making QSO's or points, we tell how many QSO's or points you

must make to get a certificate. Everyone who makes that many or more would then get the certificate, participation point, and web site listing. Everyone who makes less than the number of QSO's or points gets a participation point and web site listing.

We believe that is more true to the concept of a challenge. You challenge yourself to master the challenge, and it doesn't depend on what anyone else does as in a sprint or contest.

We've thought about this next change for the past couple years and are now putting it into effect. In the past, I (K3WWP) would just get in one contest and easily master the challenge in just a couple hours. Since then, others picked up on that trick also. That runs counter to the concept of a month-long challenge. So beginning in 2011, we are eliminating contest QSO's from most of our challenges. The exception being our annual FD challenge which is an extra June challenge.

We are going to try to find a good balance between setting the bar too high and making it too hard, and setting it too low and making it too easy to master a challenge. That may take some fine tuning as we go along.

Hopefully these changes will serve to increase the amount of CW activity on the bands during non-contest times especially.

- Just a quick reminder we're continuing with the hidden call sign idea originally suggested by Bill KB3XS. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (December 4) and win a gift certificate for 100 NAQCC QSL cards produced by the CheapQSLs.com company run by Hal K6RF (#0171) and donated by the NAQCC thanks to your generous monetary donations to the club.

- There are many prizes in play in different ways over the next several months now. We urge you to check the prizes page in the home section of the web site to learn about them. Briefly, we have the following:
100 NAQCC QSL Cards
Classic book - "The Radio Boys At Mountain Pass"
Membership plaque
CD-ROM book - "Recollections of a Radio Receiver - the HBR Adventure 1957 -2008"
Beautiful K1/K2 hand crafted wooden knob inserts
Another way to win 100 NAQCC QSL Cards
Packets of hand crafted paddle handles, knob inserts, straight key knobs
ARRL Operating Manuals

Of course, all prizes are just that - prizes. No cost to you other than participating in this or that club activity, and in some cases being lucky in a drawing after participating.

All have been donated by members or purchased by the NAQCC from monetary donations from our members. Thank you very much!

- We've been curious as to the rather large number of members who unsubscribe from our email list. Perhaps it is because you thought the list was ONLY for notifying members of the release date of the newsletters. That is NOT the case. The list is also used for net reminders, sprint reminders, and any other information that can't wait till the next newsletter is released.

If you unsubscribed because you thought it was only a newsletter reminder list and want to resubscribe, simply email us at **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** with the following info in the body of the email:

Your call - (Example - K3WWP)
Your on-air name (Example - John)
Your email address (Example - jqp@email.org)

We'll get you resubcribed so you can start receiving these important email messages again.

3a. CHAPTER NEWS:

Here is where our club chapters present news about their chapter activities. We currently have two chapters - European and Minnesota. We're looking forward to expanding that roster. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines under the auspices of the NAQCC. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area, let us know and we'll send a copy of the guidelines.

EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

pix_sm_mw3ymy (13K)

Items in this section are from EU Chapter President Matt MW3YMY unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should got to **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK**

Support for the European Chapter is constantly growing. Although still a work in progress, the website is up and running for the EU Chapter.

As ever, any comments/suggestions/questions about the chapter are very welcome. The address is: **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK**

MINNESOTA CHAPTER:

From Keith K0HJC #3976 - Questions or comments should got to Chapter President Rich, WD0K at WD0K@arrl.net.

The Minnesota Chapter of the NAQCC has completed its initial organization, with Rich, WD0K as President, and K9OSC as webmaster of the chapter website, http://www.naqccmn.com/. We will continue our informal activities as described on the website, and will add news of future activities as they develop. We welcome your suggestions for those activities as we continue to develop the chapter.

4. THE NAQCC ELMER PROJECT:

The Elmer project is co-ordinated by Karl N3IJR (L) and Ron K5DUZ. If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**
N3IJR - pix_email_n3ijr (1K)

Elmer's tip: Many QRPers equate QRP with tiny little rigs, and honestly think that's what QRP is. However the definition of QRP says nothing about the size of the rig, but only the output power of

the rig. If your rig puts out 5 watts or less of RF power, that's QRP. It can be a rig that fits in your shirt pocket or a 'boat anchor' rig you would need a wheelbarrow to haul it around.

Not much of a tip yet, but here it comes. To be the most successful in making QRP QSO's, the best rig to use is a mainstram rig with a lot of bells and whistles. It is so much easier to operate such a rig with its digital readouts, easy to use RIT, multiple bandwidth filters, memories, easy split frequency operation, and on and on. While some of the tiny dedicated QRP rigs may have some of these features, they are not all that intuitive or easy to use.

I would suggest if you do your QRP operating from home and it is in your budget that you get a good Kenwood, ICOM, Yaesu, Elecraft (to mention a few) rig that can be turned down to 5 watts, and use it for your QRP work. Only use the tiny QRP rigs for those portable operations at the park, out in the woods, on your fishing trip, or anywhere else you can't carry around a big rig and its power supply. You'll find the QSO's will come much easier for you.

Many more examples of good overall operating practices can be found on the Elmer Project page of the web site and especially on K3WWP's Web Site

NAQCC QRS Net Report

Date(UTC)	NCS	Participants
11/1/10	K3WWP	8 - K3WWP K1IEE W5IQS WB0QQT KD8GZ K8SRB VE3FUJ N9RLO
11/8/10	WY3H	2 - WY3H K3WWP (wiped out by the ARRL SS contest)

We desperately need someone to help out as NCS of our net. Anyone can do it. We'll help you out to get you started. I'm sure with almost 5,000 members, there have to be at least several who have participated in or were NCS of traffic nets. While we are not a traffic net nor even a formal net with all the QN procedure signals, such experience would help out being NCS of our net. However such experience is not necessary. If you want to help your club out by being a NCS, please contact Tom WY3H at the email address shown in this section. We have one member who is going to start a Pacific Northwest area net in January. Thanks to Stewart KE7LKW for that. We'll have details in the newsletter and in the Elmer section of the web site as they become available. We also had some other folks express interest, but never followed up any further. If that was our fault, please re-contact Tom again requesting a read receipt for your email and making it high priority. Send it only to Tom, no one else.

We have changed our call-up for the net, and our participants, K1IEE in particular, think it's better this way.

The call up is now:
CQ NQN DE N3AQC QNI
NQN being Naqcc Qrs Net and QNI being the formal net QN signal for folks to check in. After that, you send only your call once, and follow the lead of the NCS from there on. He will probably tell you to wait (AS), and call the net again to get more check-ins, then after enough folks check in, each will get a turn to make comments, etc.

From Tom WY3H - Our net frequency is 3575.0 and the net begins at 0130Z (8:30 p.m. EST). The net is quite informal and everyone is invited to check in. If anyone is not familiar with net Q-signals that's OK too (we really don't use them much except for QNI). The NAQCC would also like members to step up to volunteer as Net Control ops. You don't have to commit to every week. What we are asking members is to try being an NCS just once. Please contact Tom, WY3H at:
TJMITCHELLKX3@COMCAST.NET

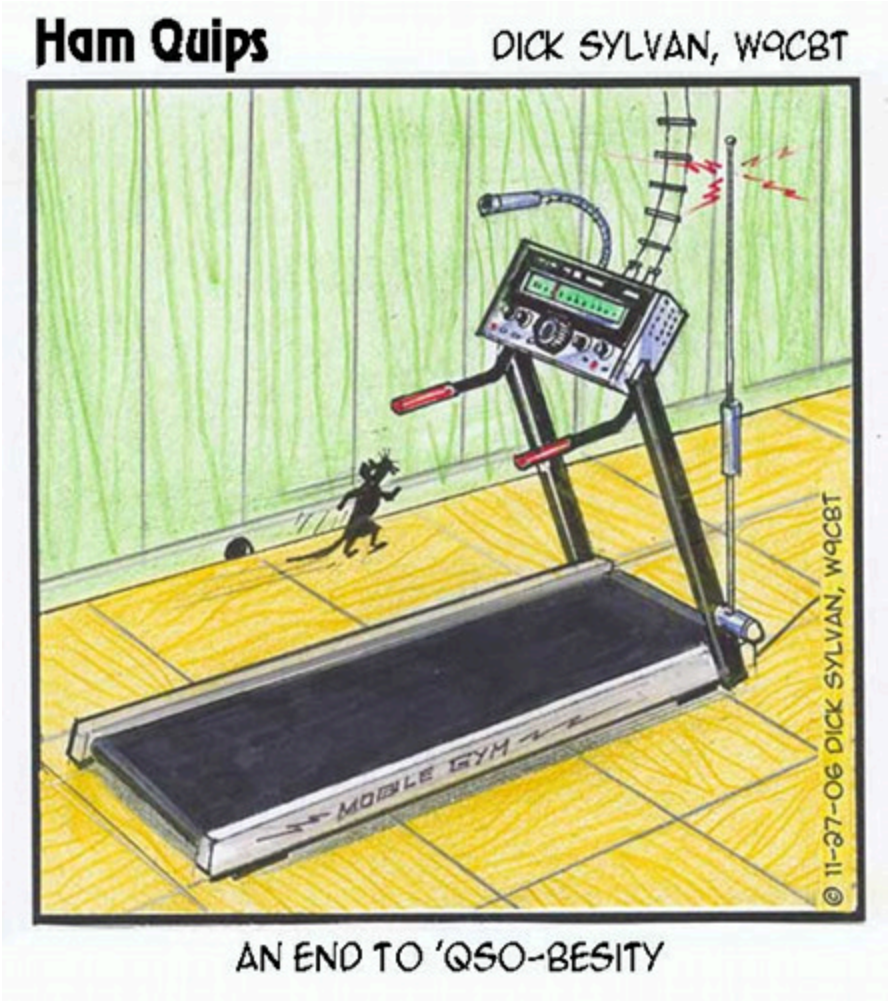
We need YOU to make our Elmer project work. If you need help with any ham radio matter or are

willing to help others with your expertise, please contact our Elmer directors:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**
N3IJR - pix, email, n3ijr (1K)
WY3H - **TJMITCHELLKX3@COMCAST.NET**

Also see Elmer Project on the web site.

5. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist, and he is supplying a cartoon each month for the newsletter. The NAQCC is very honored to be one of just two organizations to feature Dick's cartoons. In addition to our newsletter, Dick's cartoons appear monthly in The K9YA Telegraph, an on-line only Ham Radio E-zine where he is the staff cartoonist. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters.



6. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to

PAUL142857@GMAIL.COM. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Harry Hilton Jr. AA1QT #4473

AA1QT Harry located in Brownville Jct, Maine. Rigs are TenTec Century21 CW, TenTec Omni-5 ssb/CW, Complete Collins 32and75 setup for CW primary, Kenwood TS940s, Yeasu 726 w/all options, Staight key primary and Bencher backup for the faster work.

Antennas as of yet are separate dipoles for each band, three towers with Mosley and Cushcraft Beams.

I was off the air after a major heart attack in 1998 that was followed by four major heart and kidney opperations. Against all Dr's wishes I put my station back together piece by piece in the spring of 2009. After seven heart surgeons kept me alive, all that was missing was my Ham shack and Key. Best medicine I have had in last nine years. C-U-agn my CW friends..AA1QT.

7. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS: This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is December 3. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them, and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** I'm still having fun and success with my mW 'streak' that I started back in May as a result of enjoying our NAQCC mW challenge. It's now 193 straight days as I write this that I've made a QSO using 930 mW output power. My main 'streak' of 5W (or less) QSO's is closing in on 6,000 straight days now with under 60 days to go.

A lot of folks keep asking me how I can maintain the streaks and some seem to think I have some kind of magic antenna. Well, I don't as you can see from the antenna pictures on my web site. In response to the questions, I've suggested some good tips on how anyone can do what I've done if they have the time - that would be the only limiting factor. These tips can be found in my web site diary that is updated every day.

If you're at all interested, check out my web site.

- **From Lloyd KC5FM #4408 -** NAQCC is tweeting at http://www.twitter.com/NAQCC. If you want to help spread the word, email KC5FM@arrl.net. I will set you up on Hootsuite (and you don't have to have a Twitter account). Then you can tell the world what NAQCC is doing in your area.

Club email address - **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.